

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 GUATEM 04215 062332Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

-----077264 062335Z /65

O 062154Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6636

S E C R E T GUATEMALA 4215

NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS -1

TAGS: GT, GH UK PBOR

SUBJ:GUATEMALA-BELIZE DISPUTE

REF: STATE 156404; GUATEMALA 4205

1. IT IS DIFFICULT TO ANTICIPATE WHAT GUATEMALAN REACTION WILL BE TO BRITISH REINFORCEMENT OF SIX HARRIER JETS ARRIVING IN BELIZE IN JULY 7, FINAL DAY OF GUATEMALAN-BRITISH TALKS IN WASHINGTON. ON ONE HAND, ARRIVAL OF SIX HARRIERS AND REPORTED PRESENCE BRITISH FRIGATE WILL HAVE SOBERING EFFECT ONGOG AND INHIBIT ANY MILITARY ACTIONS THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN PLANNING AFTER CONCLUSION OF WASHINGTON TALKS. OUR ASSESSMENT HAD BEEN THAT GOG WOULD NOT INITIATE MILITARY ACTION SIMPLY BECAUSE OF BREAKDOWN OF WASHINGTON TALKS, AND THAT ONLY MORE DRAMATIC ACTION SUCH AS SOME STEP TOWARD UNILATERAL DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE WOULD PRECIPITATE IT. BRITISH EVIDENTLY DO NOT SHARE OUR ASSESSMENT AND HAVE SEEN FIT TO REINFORCE.

2. WE BELIEVE BRITISH REINFORCEMENTS WILL PUT LAUGERUD IN EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT POSITION. THREE TIMES WITHIN PAST TWELVE DAYS WE HAVE GONE IN TO URGE RESTRAINT ON GOG, COUPLED WITH OUR ASSURANCE TO THEM THAT BRITISH WERE SIMILARLY TAKING EVERY MEASURE TO AVOID ANY ACTION WHICH COULD EXACERBATE THE SITUATION. THE GOG HAS, AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, HEDED OUR

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 GUATEM 04215 062332Z

DEMARCHES AND HAS REFRAINED FROM ANY PROVOCATIVE ACTION.

3. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, REPORTED PRESENCE OF BRITISH FRIGATE OFF BELIZEAN COAST HAS CREATED STRONG PUBLIC AND PRIVATE REACTION FROM GOG. GOG COMMUNIQUE ON FRIGATE (GUATEMALA 4204) IS SHRILL IN TONE AND ACTING FONMIN OBIOLS' SECOND APPROACH TO ME ON THE SUBJECT TODAY AT NOON (GUATEMALA 4205)

HAS MADE CLEAR THAT GOG WILL NOT FEEL ITSELF BOUND BY EARLIER COMMITMENTS TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT IF BRITISH FRIGATE REMAINS IN PLACE. COMING ON TOP OF THIS, ARRIVAL OF HARRIERS WILL OBVIOUSLY RUB SALT IN THE WOUNDS AND WILL BE HUMILIATING TO GOG, PARTICULARLY TO PRESIDENT WHO WILL BE IN AN EXPOSED POSITION VIS-A-VIS THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY . AN ADDITIONAL CONSEQUENCE, WE BELIEVE, WILL BE THAT WHATEVER PROGRESS MIGHT HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED IN THE ROWLAND-MOLINA TALKS WILL BE NULLIFIED WHEN GOG LEARNS OF THE HARRIERS' ARRIVAL. IN SUM WHILE WE CANNOT PREDICT WHETHER THE GUATEMALANS WILL MAKE A MILITARY RESPONSE , LAUGERUD WILL OBVIOUSLY BE UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM VARIOUS QUARTERS TO RESPOND MILITARILY IN SOME WAY.

4. FINALLY, OUR CREDIBILITY VIS-A-VIS THE GUATEMALANS, AND HENCE OUR ABILITY TO INFLUENCE THEIR ACTIONS, WILL BE IMPAIRED. IN GUATEMALAN EYES, WE WILL BE SEEN AS HAVING CONVEYED UNRELIABLE ASSURANCES ABOUT BRITISH BEHAVIOR AND THEY WILL PROBABLY NOT BE SATISFIED--THE HARRIERS ARRIVE AND THE FRIGATE REMAINS ON STATION--THAT WE HAVE PUT SUFFICIENT PRESSURE ON UK TO RESTRAIN THEM FROM TAKING ACTION THEY WILL REGARD AS FLAGRANTLY PROVOCATIVE AND AS A BREACH OF FAITH. INDEED, IF THEY SHOULD LEARN THAT WE PROVIDED REFUELING STOP FOR HARRIERS, THEY WILL SEE US AS HAVING ABETTED BRITISH ACTION . IN SHORT, PRESIDENT AND HIS TOP ADVISORS WILL REGARD US, WHETHER FAIRLY OR NOT, AS HAVING TILTED IN FAVOR OF THE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 GUATEM 04215 062332Z

BRITISH IN THIS CRISIS.

5. GOG IS STILL EXPECTING A RESPONSE TO THEIR REPRESENTATIONS TO US ABOUT THE FRIGATE. I ASSUME THAT THIS MAY HAVE BEEN COVERED IN SECRETARY'S CONVERSATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER MOLINA, BUT IT WILL BE USEFUL TO BE ABLE TO RESPOND HERE ON THIS POINT.
BOSTER

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTES, MOBILIZATION, CAT-B, POLITICAL SITUATION, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GUATEM04215
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P840077-2385, N770004-0152
Format: TEL
From: GUATEMALA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770789/aaaaczbb.tel
Line Count: 102
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e8beb370-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 77 STATE 156404, 77 GUATEMALA 4205
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1955416
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GUATEMALA-BELIZE DISPUTE
TAGS: PBOR, PDEV, MPOL, GT, BH, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e8beb370-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009